

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended and claims 23 and 24 have been canceled. Claims 1, 11, 21 and 22 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 and 11-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Braun, U.S. Patent No. 4,646,891. Claims 5 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Braun in view of Ogawa et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,931,940. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner will note, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to include the subject matter of dependent claims 23 and 24, respectively. In the Examiner's Office Action, the Examiner indicated that dependent claims 23 and 24 included allowable subject matter. In view of this, claims 1 and 11, as amended, should be in condition for allowance.

With regard to dependent claims 2-5 and 12-15, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable due to their respective dependence upon independent claims 1 and 11, as well as due to the additional recitations in these claims.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-5 and 11-15 clearly define the present invention over the references relied on by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-10, 16-20, 23 and 24 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 21 and 22 have been allowed by the Examiner. Applicant greatly appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner. As mentioned hereinabove, the subject matter of dependent claims 23 and 24 has been added to independent claims 1 and 11, respectively. Therefore, pending claims 1-22 should be in condition for allowance.

With specific regard to dependent claims 6-10 and 16-20, these have not been rewritten in independent form at this time, since amended independent claims 1 and 11 are in condition for allowance. However, Applicant reserves the right to rewrite these claims in independent form at a later date if it is so desired.

Favorable consideration and early allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

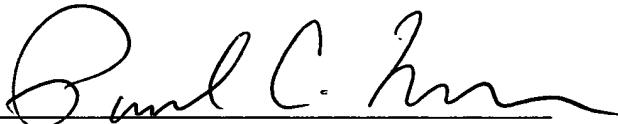
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Amendment dated December 29, 2005
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In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Paul C. Lewis, Registration No. 43,368 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
Paul C. Lewis, #43,368

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P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000